

Warm-Up

16

Name _____

The Washington Monument

The Washington Monument was built to honor George Washington. He was America's first president. Its construction was discussed even before his death. Designers and public leaders proposed different designs. They helped to raise money, too. However, lack of funds and design arguments halted work on it several times. The cornerstone was laid on July 4, 1848. Construction took thirty-seven years to complete. The monument was dedicated in 1885. This was almost ninety years after Washington's death.

The monument is an obelisk. The shaft of white marble slowly tapers to a point. That's why the walls are fifteen feet thick at the base and just eighteen inches thick at the top. Its top is shaped like a pyramid.

The monument's white marble blocks came from **quarries** in Maryland and Massachusetts. They are held together with a cement-like mortar. There is no metal reinforcement. The monument weighs 90,854 tons. That's as much as 60,000 cars! The Washington Monument is the world's tallest masonry structure (stone and mortar). It is the tallest structure in the nation's capital. It will remain that way. It is against the law to build anything taller.

Eight small windows are located at the 500-foot-level. There are two windows on each side. They offer a beautiful view of the city. An elevator gives visitors a fast ride to the top.

Check Your Understanding

- From the context of the passage, what are **quarries**?
 - places where wine is stored
 - places where wood is kept
 - places where stone is dug out of the ground
 - places where railroad cars are kept
- What material holds the marble blocks in place?

a. steel	c. nothing
b. bricks	d. mortar
- From the context of the passage, what natural event might pose the most danger to the Washington Monument?

a. floods	c. long periods of heat
b. blizzards	d. earthquakes
- Which word describes the shape of the monument as a towering shaft of white marble?

a. obelisk	c. pyramid
b. quarry	d. cylinder

/4